



# Illinois Early Learning Council

March 21, 2022



# Agenda

1. Welcome & Introductions
2. Level Setting: Early Learning Council Planning and Future Direction
3. 2021 Needs Assessment—The Data Matrix Project and The Family Needs Study Update: Consultation for the ELC
4. Early Childhood Enrollment Campaign/ECE Enrollment/Community Outreach Grants
5. Strengthen and Grow Child Care Grants Rollout
6. Family Advisory Committee Mentoring Program
7. Raising Illinois
8. Public Comments & Announcements
9. Closing Comments & Adjourn

# Early Childhood Enrollment Campaign Status Update

March 21, 2022



Governor's Office of  
Early Childhood Development

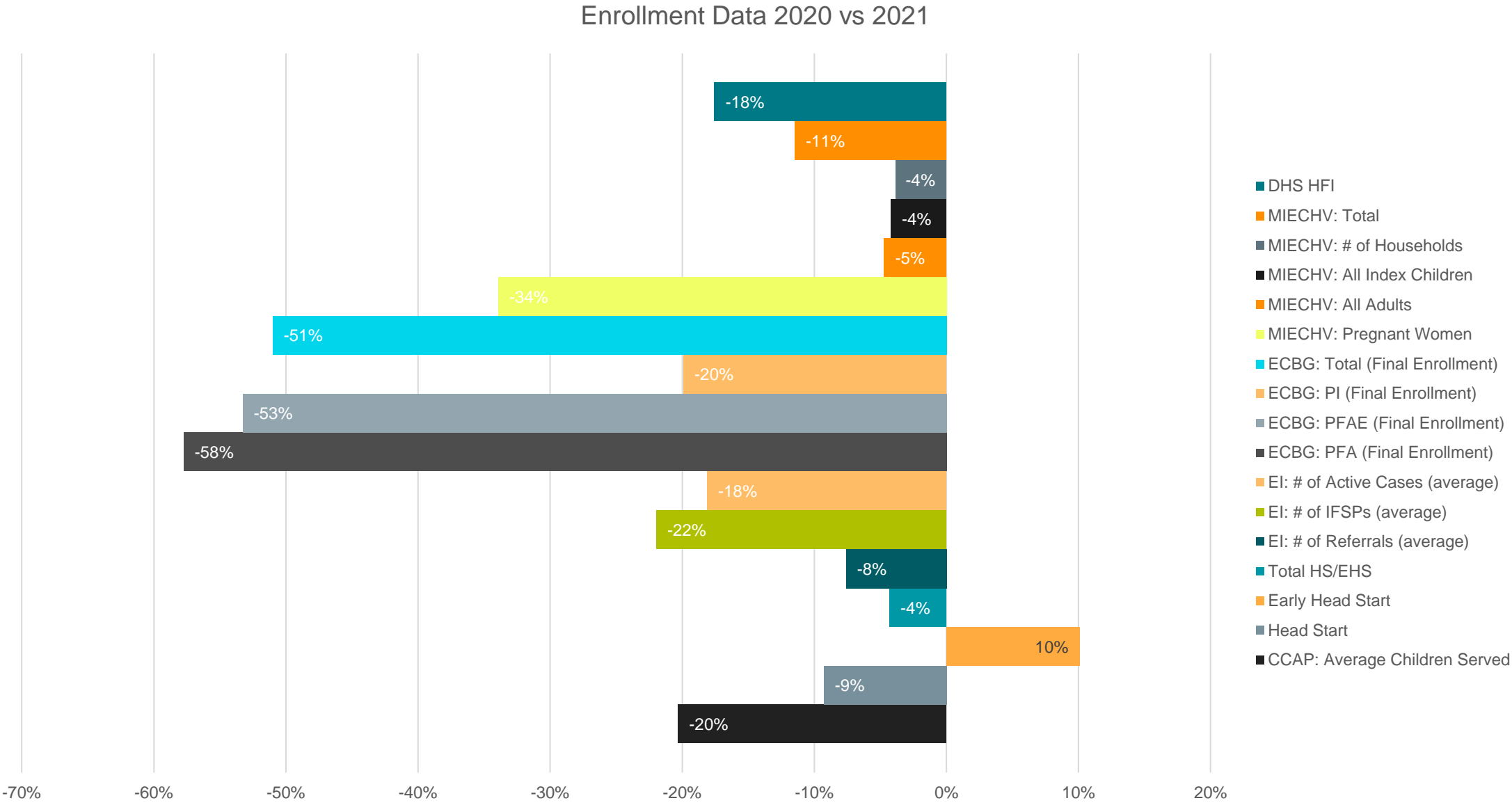
**Reminder:  
What is the  
Problem Illinois  
Seeks to Solve?**

# Situation

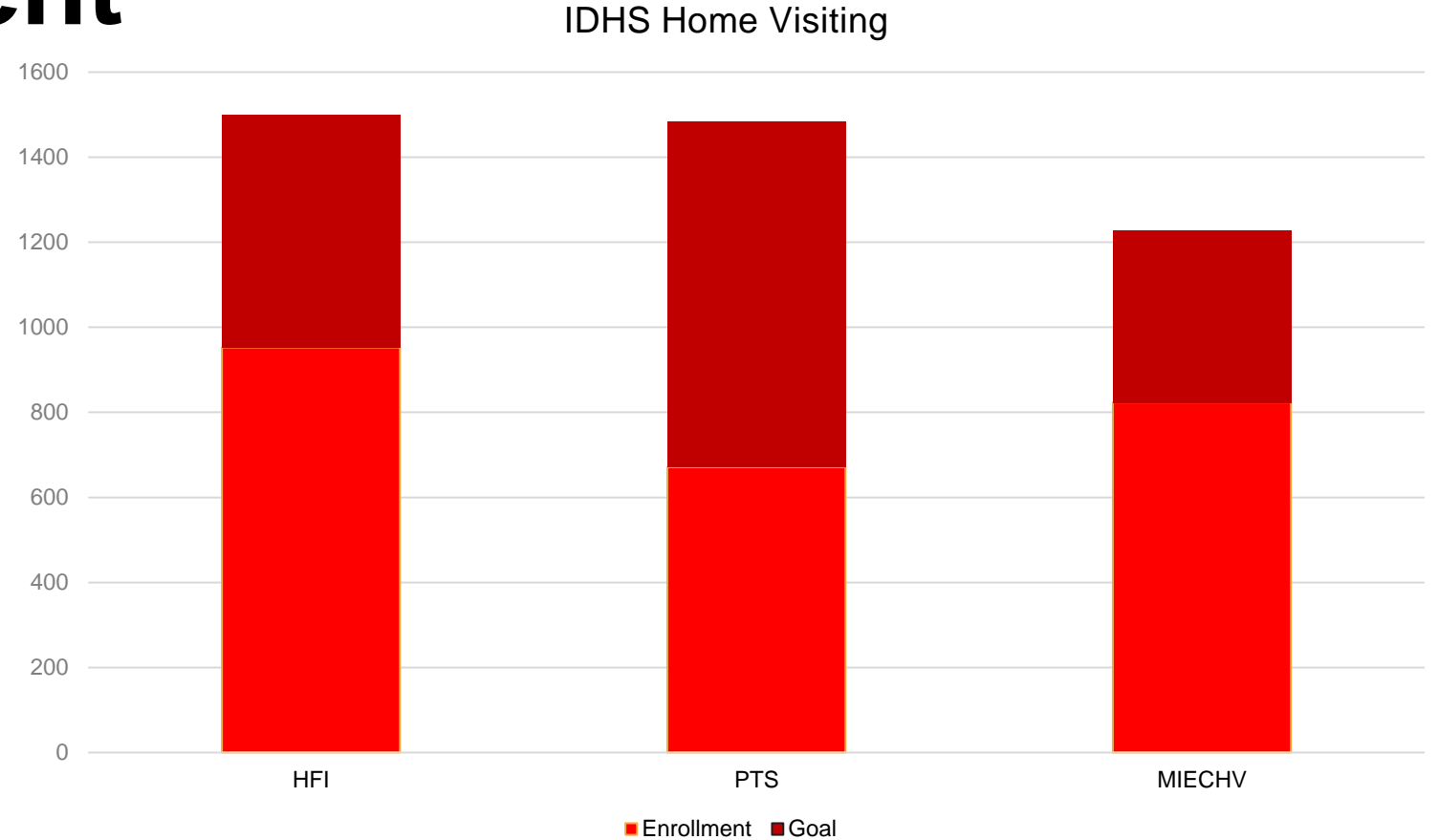


- Enrollment is down in early childhood education and care (ECEC) programs across Illinois' mixed delivery system.
- The pandemic surfaced the need for State Agencies to provide relevant, timely, and tailored information to families within their local communities.

# 2020/2021 Enrollment



# Current Enrollment

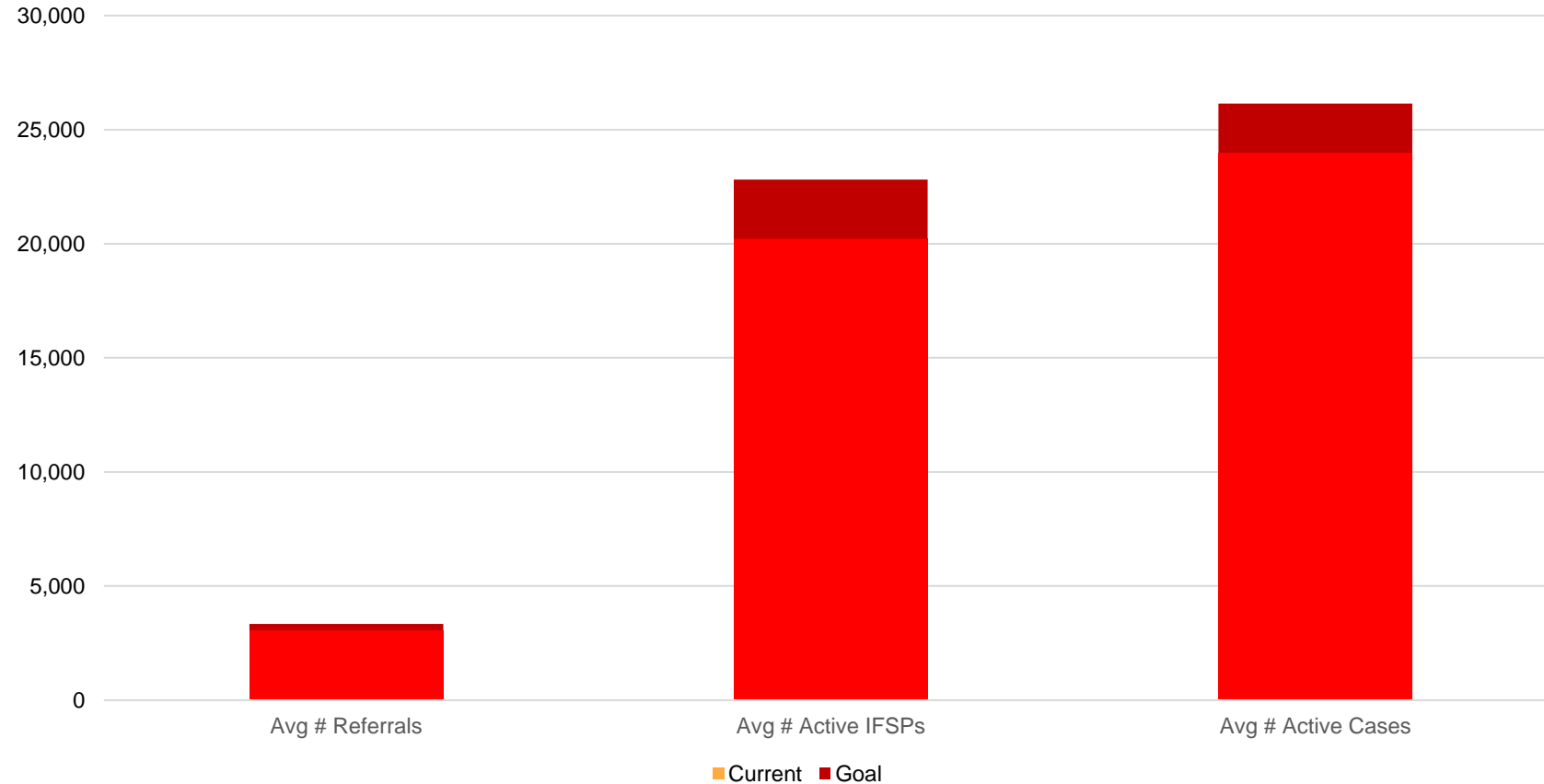


## IDHS HOME VISITING - Current enrollment / Goal:

- HFI ( SFY22 Q1 ): 953 / 1,500
- PTS (SFY22 Q1 ): 671 / 1,483
- MIECHV (SFY22 Q1): 823 / 1,228

# Current Enrollment

IDHS Early Intervention



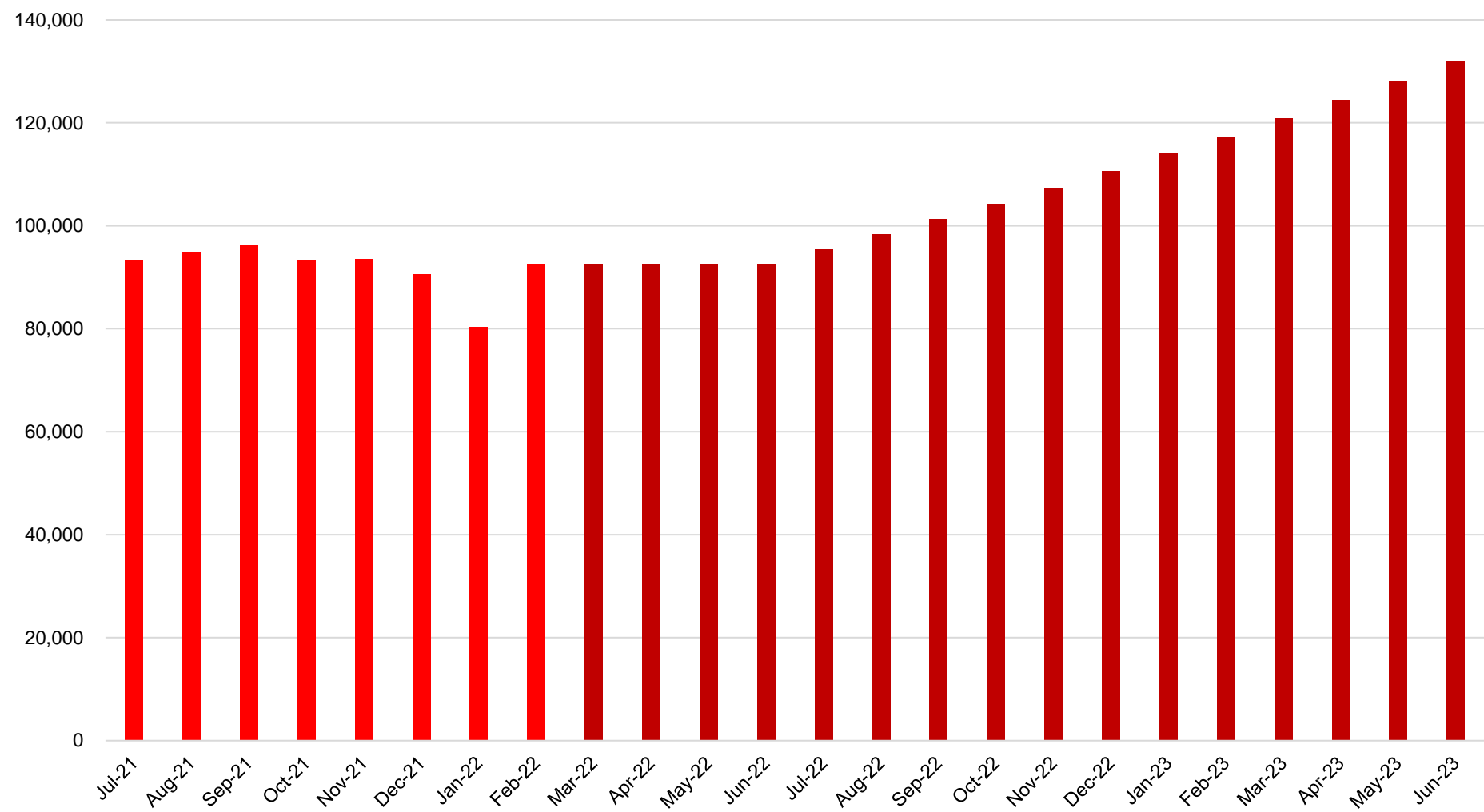
Current: SFY22 through January (7 months)/ Goal (pre pandemic/ SFY19 numbers)

- Avg # Referrals: 3,052/ 3,333
- Avg # Active IFSPs: 20,219/ 22,812
- Avg # Active Cases (Intake + Active IFSPs): 23,984/ 26,150



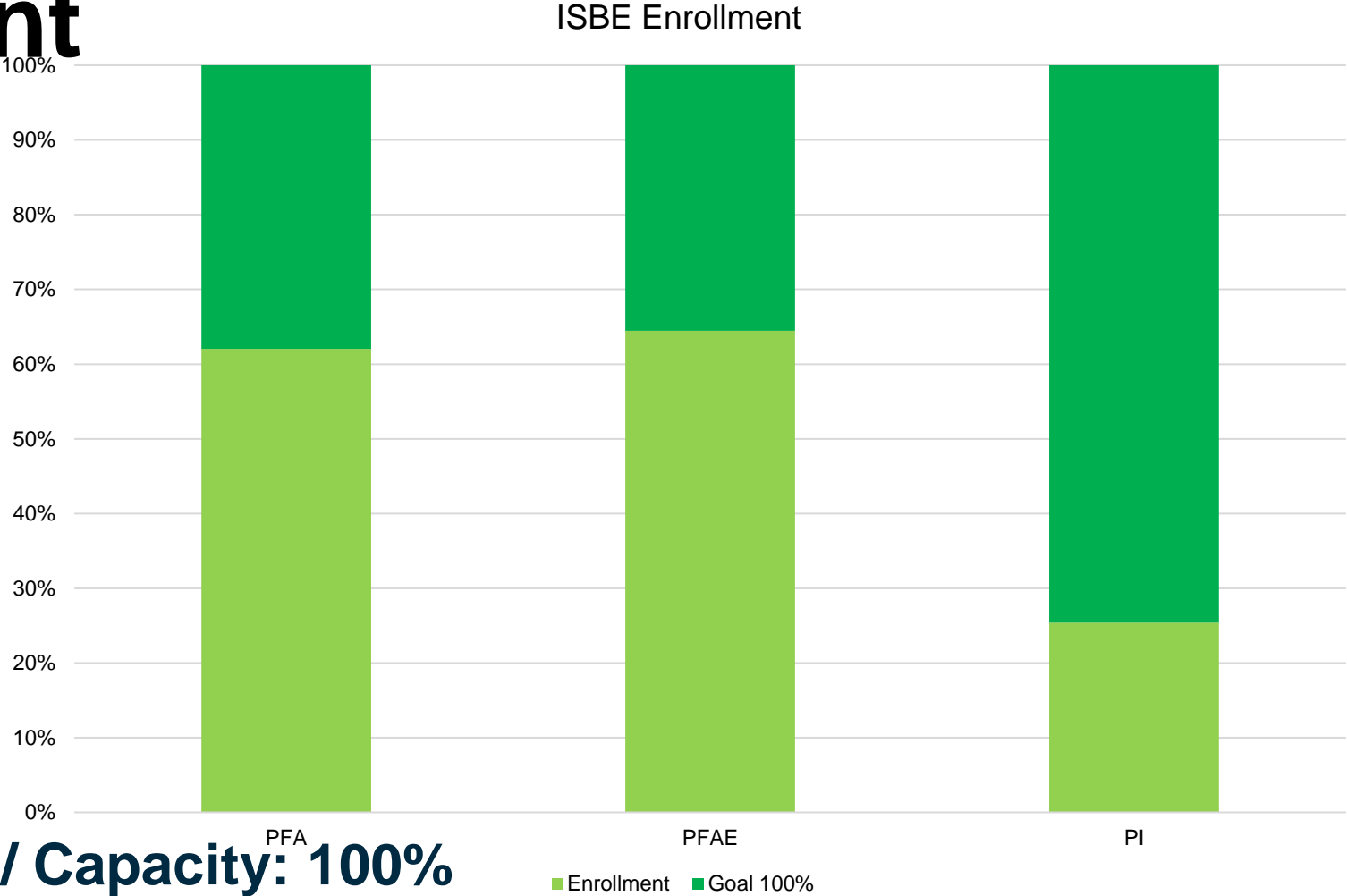
# Current Enrollment

IDHS Child Care



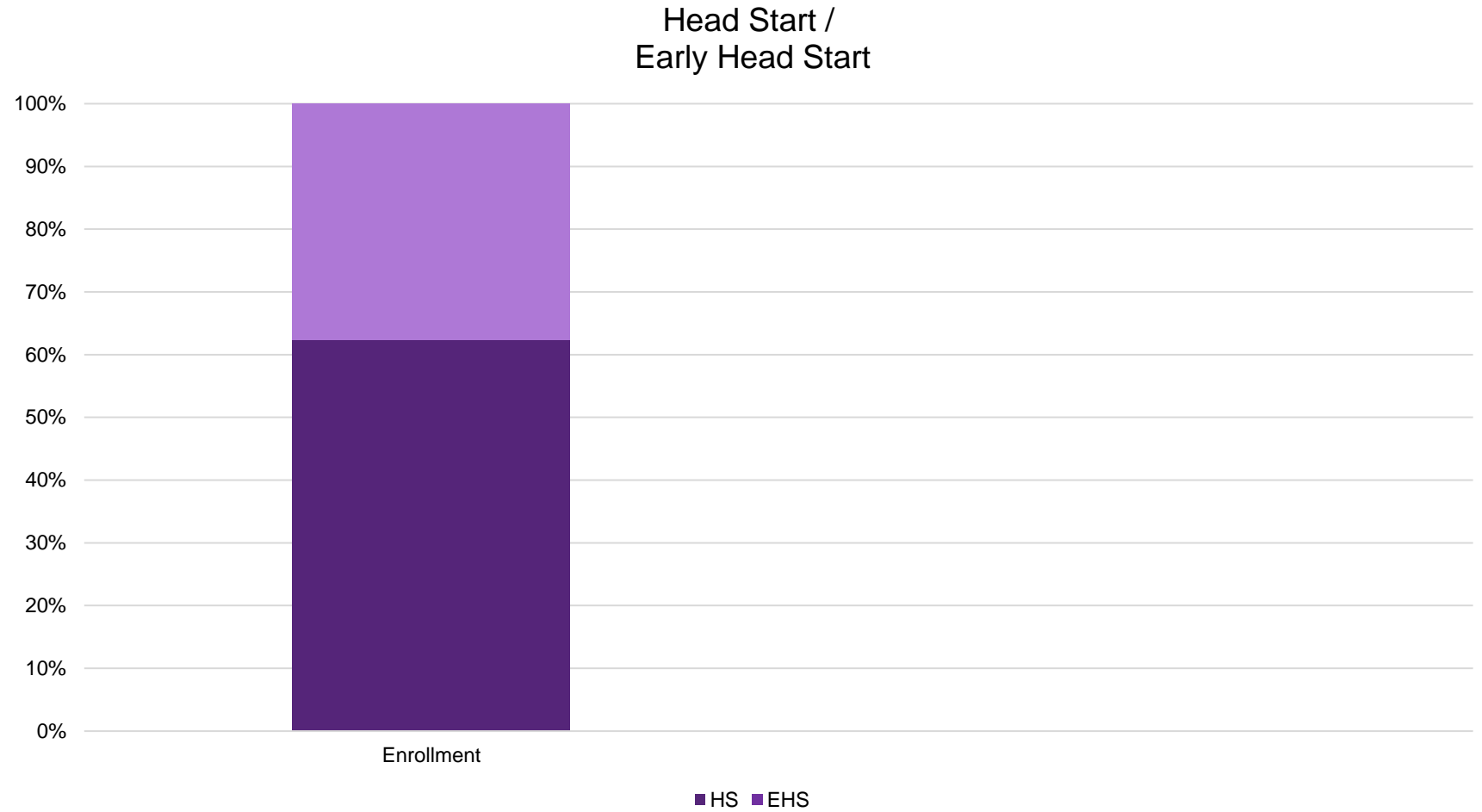
Current: February: 92,643/ Goal by June 2023: 130,000 (3% increase monthly)

# Current Enrollment



## ISBE Enrollment (as of 1/26/22) / Capacity: 100%

- PFA: 51,719 / 83,376
- PFAE: 4,266 / 6,617
- PI: 4,472 / 17,596



HS/EHS GOAL together is 29,477 = 100%.

- HS: 18,372
- EHS: 11,105

# Strategy

As part of Illinois' Learning Renewal efforts, Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER) II funding has been allocated to support:

- Development of an early childhood awareness and enrollment campaign that has statewide reach, is tailored locally, and focuses on family and community engagement strategies that promote the importance of early learning and the availability of early childhood programs and supports to families.
- Statewide rollout of Ready4K, an evidence-based text messaging curriculum offered to up to 157,000 Illinois families in multiple languages.
  - In a series of randomized control trials, this approach has been shown to increase child development by two to three months over the course of a school year, which is key for Learning Recovery following the pandemic “year”.
  - Ready4K also provides a trusted vehicle through which the State can deliver custom messages directly to families.

# Strategy (continued)

- Additionally, IDHS will fund a community-based grant program to support local outreach.
- IDHS will also contribute funds toward statewide saturation and reach for the marketing campaign.



# What Have We Done to Date?

# Research





# Initial Research

- While awaiting GEER II contract execution, IDHS utilized COVID relief dollars to fund initial parent and provider research, conducted between June - August 2021.
- Research Objective - Better understand families' motivations and barriers to using local programs and services and develop a directional consumer profile that drives communication development and implementation.

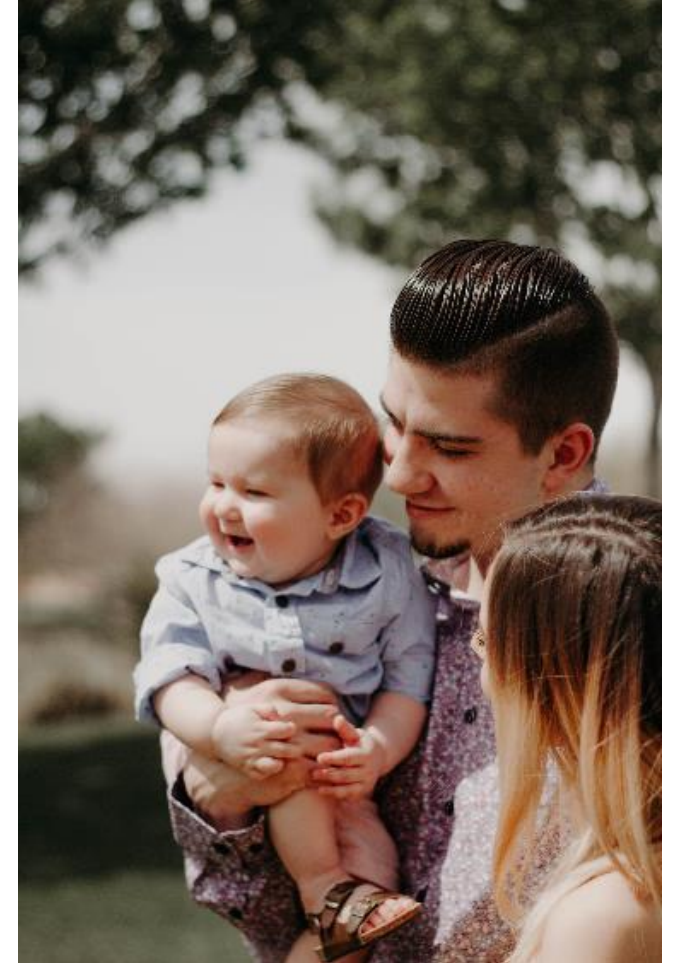




# Summary: Parent Insight Report

## High-Level Summary of Parent Attitudes & Behaviors

- ECEC services are a must-have
- Socialization concerns are high
- Parent fear and guilt enrolling their children into programs is amplified by concerns about the pandemic
- Pursuing benefits is cumbersome
- Trust/reassurance is key for initial enrollment
- Families need to feel understood/supported
- Social proof/word of mouth matters
- COVID safety protocols are appreciated
- Happy child = happier parent (seeing is believing)
- ECEC services shape aspirations for their child's future



# Summary: Parent Insight Report (continued)

## Early Childhood Enrollment Campaign Messaging

- Should make families feel hopeful
- Explain what life/the future can be once families get the support and care they need
- Engage families with visuals of happy, thriving children
- Demonstrate ease of access to quality care and supports where and when families need it



# Family Engagement



# Early Learning Council (ELC) Family Advisory Committee (FAC)

- We are very excited to report that in August 2021 the ELC FAC voted to serve as an advisory team to support both the enrollment campaign and Ready4K statewide rollout efforts!
  - FAC parents expressed enthusiasm for the rollout of Ready4K.
- At the FAC's October meeting, GOECD presented, in detail and in an interactive format, the Parent Insight Report.
  - FAC parents strongly agreed with the majority of the findings and asked insightful questions that will inform the way we message to families.



# Project Work: Updates and Next Steps



# Governor's Office Communications Support

- To help inform strategy and geotargeting and to streamline branding/creative decision-making within the Governor's Office for the enrollment campaign, joining GOECD is a Communications Team Member, Office of the Governor



# Enrollment Campaign

- October 2021.
  - The subcontract between INCCRRA and 1o8, the advertising/marketing firm supporting the statewide enrollment campaign, was executed
- December 2021 - February 2022
  - 12/8/21 Briefing to IAT. Information gathering began from state partners on enrollment goals.
  - 12/6/21 Initial Creative Brief approved by Governor's Office Comms Team, GOECD and INCCRRA. Decision made to use Illinois Cares for Kids branding with the tag paid for by the State of Illinois.
  - 12/17/21 Three creative concepts presented to GOECD and INCCRRA. Concepts were also forwarded to Governor's Office Comms Team for review and approval.
  - 1/28/21 Approval of one concept and conceptual storyboards presented to GOECD, Governor's Office Comms Team, and INCCRRA.
  - 2/10/22 illustration artist, song choice, and recording artists confirmed for the campaign. Currently reviewing 6 second storyboards with actual illustrations.
  - 2/25/22 voice over script, and advertising vocals approved.
- March 2022
  - 3/1/22 30 second story board progress approved
  - 3/8/22 6 second cut of the advertising spot approved
  - Wireframes and revisions to Illinois Cares for Kids website in progress.
  - Soft launch of social media graphics will kick off in March as a teaser, with the 30 second ad beginning in April and full asset toolkits available by the end of April.

# messaging

Tone / CTAs

While not consumer-facing language, our unifying concept is “The Illinois Family Care Network.” Our consumer-facing call to action sends people to "[IllinoisCaresForKids.org](https://IllinoisCaresForKids.org)." We'll reflect the unifying concept with description and animation, not title.

- Illinois is full of people who care. And teach. And help. Across the state, in every community, local, early childhood education and care resources are available to families. Click to find out if you qualify for care at [IllinoisCaresForKids.org](https://IllinoisCaresForKids.org)
- Find out if your family qualifies for early childhood education and care at [IllinoisCaresForKids.org](https://IllinoisCaresForKids.org)
- Illinois is full of people who care. Click to find out if you qualify for care and early educational opportunities at [IllinoisCaresForKids.org](https://IllinoisCaresForKids.org)



# local artists coming together

This campaign is all about local, artistic collaboration.

We're leveraging the illustrations of at least one local illustrator, the vocals of super songstress Meagan McNeal, local animation production, and local music production to help us develop and execute the right music track.



# tone guidelines

- **Yes to:** Words of inspiration. We aim to uplift.
- **Yes to:** Ideas that honor parental hope, make our audience feel seen.
- **Avoid:** Anything that feels condescending.
- **Avoid:** Anything that could make parents feel judged.
- **Avoid:** The word “daycare.”

# advertising spot

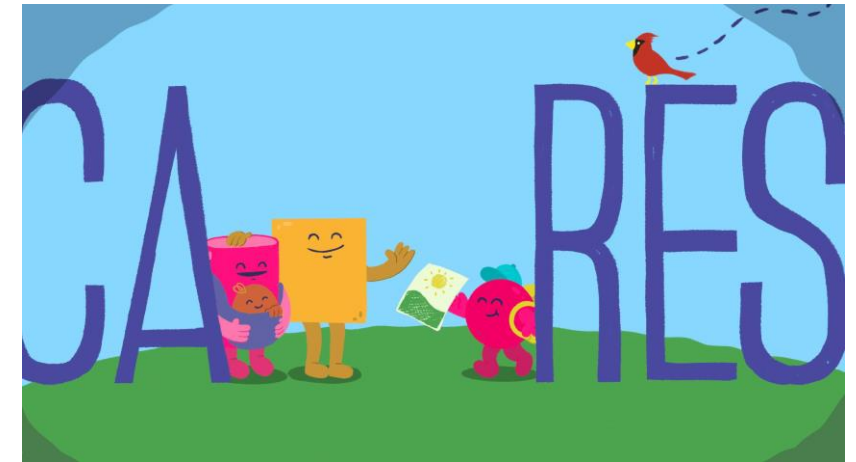
We hear the beautiful up tempo song “I Got Love” sung by Megan McNeal. It leans into the hook that helps us convey hope, care, etc. We see imagery that connects hopeful lyrics to places of care all across an outline of the state of Illinois.

VO: Illinois is full of people who care. And teach. And help.

We'll show a big Illinois map indicating all the early childhood education and care landscape with preschool/ head start teachers and child care providers with 0-5 year old's at schools and at child care facilities, an early intervention visit in a home, an example of early childhood special education, and a nod to child care at home with school-age children.

VO: Across the state, in every community, early childhood education and care resources are available for families.

Find out if your family qualifies. [Illinoiscaresforkids.org](http://Illinoiscaresforkids.org).



## what's next / timeline

### Commercial Production

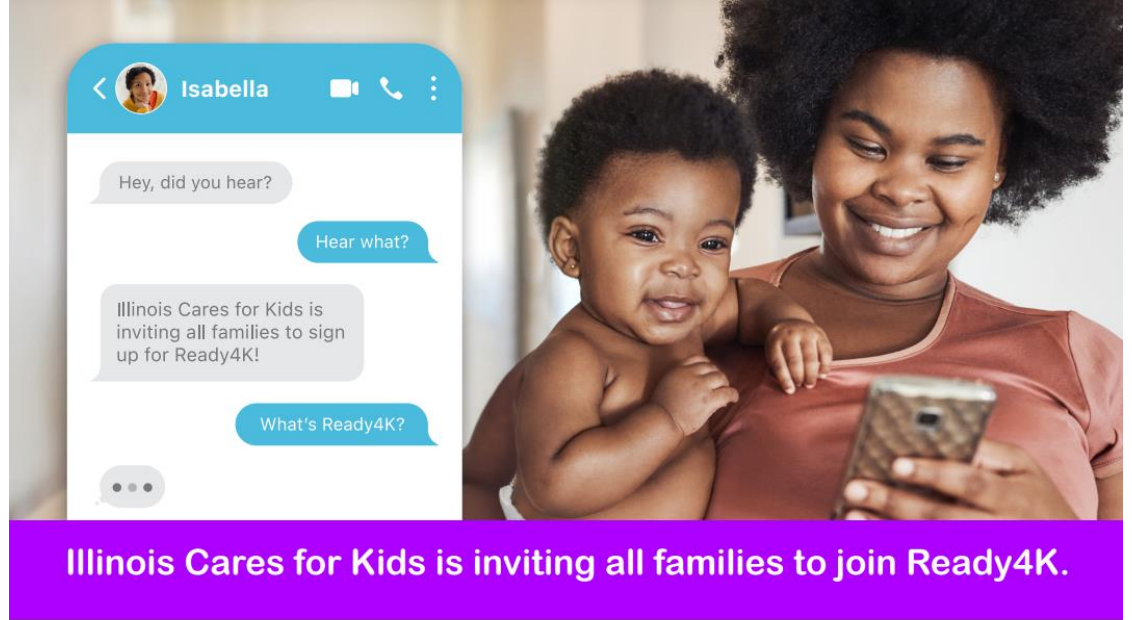
- 3/30 Production and cutdown of :15 second commercial
  - 4/1 Ship :30 commercial
  - 4/15 Ship :15 commercial
  - 4/20 Full asset toolkit
- 
- April: Begin development of statewide marketing to support the advertising plan.
  - April: Release ECEC Enrollment Community RFP to support local outreach and enrollment activities that mirror the statewide branding but provide outreach that is local, culturally responsive and relatable to the community. IDHS to present more on this shortly.

# Ready4K

Soft launched in late February.

Email to state partners  
announcing launch in  
February/early March.

**Currently 230 families  
enrolled.**



## What is Ready4K?

Ready4K is a FREE service for parents with children ages 0-11. Each week, Ready4K offers easy, relatable, fun facts and tips delivered via text messages to help kids thrive in school and life.

## Ready4K helps parents:

- Communicate better with their child
- Make learning part of every day
- Promote their children's development by building on existing family routines
- Feel supported and encouraged
- Get connected to local services and resources

Messages delivered in English, Spanish, Polish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Arabic, or Russian.

**TEXT IL4KIDS to 70138 to register or visit [illinoiscaresforkids.org](https://illinoiscaresforkids.org)**





# Ready4K

- Sign up page live at <https://www.illinoiscaresforkids.org/ready4k> form available in English, Spanish and Polish.
- Marketing materials on webpage available in English, Spanish and Polish.
- Ready4K will be wrapped into the enrollment campaign to drive additional parent participation.
- State will have the ability to send statewide messaging to the parent list.

Ready4K

Illinois Cares for Kids is inviting all families to join Ready4K. Ready4K is a FREE researched-based text messaging program for families with kids ages 0-11.

Families can expect to receive 3 texts a week with fun facts and tips on ways to help their child learn and grow.

#### WHY SHOULD I SIGN UP?

- Ready4K breaks down the complexity of parenting into small steps that are easy to achieve. In addition, the program provides continuous encouragement and support to parents over an entire calendar year.

#### HOW DO I SIGN UP?

- Signing up is easy. Just fill out the form below:

English ▼

**Sign up today!**

First name

Last name

Phone number

Email

ZIP Code

Child's date of birth

[Add Another Child?](#)

By entering your cell phone number you agree to enroll into the program and receive ParentPowered text messages from 70138 and 28922. While there is no cost for enrolling, data & message rates may apply. You can cancel your receipt of ParentPowered text messages any time by texting STOP to 70138. For help with ParentPowered text HELP to 70138 or email us at [support@parentpowered.com](mailto:support@parentpowered.com).

☐ I accept the full [Terms & Conditions](#) and [Privacy Policy](#).

☐ I'm not a robot



**Sign Up**

# Ready4K

- October 2021
  - October 18, 2021, The subcontract between INCCRRA and Ready4K was executed
  - October 28, 2021, Official kick-off, focused on family enrollment strategies, took place on.
  - Weekly implementation meetings with GOECD, Ready4K, and INCCRRA began
- December 2021 - February 2022
  - December 1, 2021, INCCRRA hires Marketing Specialist to coordinate these efforts.
  - December 6, 2021, Decision made to use Illinois Cares for Kids branding with the tag paid for by the State of Illinois.
  - February 14, 2022, Sign-up webpage live on the Illinois Cares for Kids website at <https://www.illinoiscaresforkids.org/ready4k>
- March 2022
  - Ready4K form and marketing materials available in English, Spanish, and Polish.
  - Ready4K has 231 enrolled families.

# Thank you!

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# Bridging the Gap:

A MENTORSHIP PROPOSAL FOR THE FAC AND THE EARLY LEARNING  
COUNCIL

# FAC Year in Review: Accomplishments

- ❑ Secured a Spanish translator for all FAC meetings.
  - ❑ Participated in focus groups for The Morten Group-needs assessment study prenatal to birth and birth to three
- ❑ Conducted a statewide systems scan to determine factors for decreased enrollment in childcare settings.
  - ❑ Served as an advisory committee to the State's Childcare Enrollment campaign.
- ❑ Consulted on Project B: Needs Assessment with AIR-focus groups, interviews and provided feedback on the survey.
  - ❑ Presenter for Partner Plan Act Conference (IAFC)

## Proposal Overview

- ❑ 7 COFI-trained parent mentors
- ❑ Community organizer experience
- ❑ 7:16 mentor to FAC parent leader ratio
- ❑ Outstanding “thought partners”
- ❑ Non-traditional mentor experience (year 1)
- ❑ Traditional model was the original design of the FEIS.



# The Ask & The Benefits



## The Ask

16 members of the ELC to mentor 1:1 the FAC for the duration of 2022.



## The Benefits

- Meeting allies
- Appreciation for parent perspective



## More Benefits

- Stronger relationship with parent leaders: stronger ELC core
- More equitable system



# Obligations & Process for ELC Members

## TERMS

1 year term of service as an FAC mentor.

## OBLIGATIONS

Mentors would meet 1:1 on a quarterly basis with their FAC mentee.

Mentors would commit to attend 4 out of 6 bimonthly FAC meetings.

Mentors and mentees would participate in program evaluation at the close of the term

## SELECTION PROCESS

Interested ELC members should submit a written statement to the ELC leadership and FAC Co-chairs stating why they want to mentor an FAC parent leader.

Selection criteria and matching process to be determined.



# Public Comments & Announcements

# Closing Comments & Adjourn



**Thank you!**